

**GREENWICH CENTRAL SCHOOL
HEALTH OFFICES**

BEE STINGS

There are two types of bee sting reactions: local and systemic.

Local reactions are limited to the sting area and present as redness, swelling, pain, and itching at and around the site. Local reactions are not life-threatening and respond to ice and Benadryl. The redness and swelling can last for several days, but should become a smaller area and not get bigger. Bee stings can become infected as often times bees land on garbage and dirt prior to stinging their victim. A physician should evaluate any bee sting that is not improving.

Systemic reactions involve symptoms away from the site, such as hives, swelling of the lips and eyes, and swelling of the site of the sting. Systemic reactions can also cause wheezing, difficulty breathing, and eventually lowered blood pressure. An example of a systemic reaction would be a victim stung on the leg and develops hives and swelling of the lips. Systemic reactions need to be evaluated by a physician. Benadryl and/or epi-pens are often ordered for a person with a history of a systemic reaction. Systemic reactions can be life-threatening and lead to Anaphylactic Shock.

Anaphylactic shock is a life-threatening emergency that can result from a systemic reaction to a bee sting. This occurs within the first few minutes of being stung and must be treated by a physician immediately. It presents as severe difficulty breathing, wheezing, coughing, generalized swelling, flushed skin, and very low blood pressure. Anyone can experience a local, systemic, or anaphylactic reaction to a bee sting at anytime.

If your child requires medical attention when stung by a bee, or requires Benadryl and/or an EpiPen for bee stings, please notify you child's school health office.